

## MATTHEWS VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 10, 2017

### Minutes

Chairperson Fisk Outwater called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. at Matthews Town Hall

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Kathleen Wilsbach read a Margaret Mead quote about small groups making a difference in the world.

**Committee Members present:** Fisk Outwater, Tom Cannon, Terry Price, Gregg Smith, Jack Santaniello, Angelo Renguso, Larry Stawicki, John Ramseur, Kathleen Wilsbach, Ed Dement, Freddie Baylor, Joe Bochicchio and Beth McLemore

**Guests welcomed:** Janene McGee, The Mecklenburg County Community Support Services Veterans Services Division Director, Debbie Mrozinski and Scott Whiting from the Crockett Foundation, Jim Whatley, Daryl Sanders and Ilse York

Ms. Mrozinski spoke about the Crockett Foundation being a supporter of U. S. Military Veterans and retired military service dogs in need through their wrestling foundation. The book "The Crockett Foundation Presents WHEN WRESTLING WAS WRESTLING" was passed to committee members. More information about the foundation can be accessed at [CrockettFoundation.com](http://CrockettFoundation.com).

**Minutes of December 10, 2016.** One correction was made under New Business, paragraph 2 changing January 11 to January 10. The minutes were approved as corrected.

### Old Business:

1. Our customers (veterans and families). Subcommittee 4 is taking this for action.
2. **Subcommittee 1.** Tom Cannon said SC#1 met on November 30<sup>th</sup> and proposed the following objectives:
  - a. Serve as contact for ToM Web site and update as needed.
  - b. Arrange to fund MVAC banners and placards and confirm schedule and locations with Public Works. Additional dates for flying the banners are May 15-19 for Memorial Day, June 19-Jul 3 for Fourth of July and November 6-13 for Veteran's Day were approved by ToM Public Works. Purchase two placards using existing poster design for Chamber and other meetings.
  - c. Develop a half page community handout of MVAC mission and summary of objectives.
  - d. Serve as a platform to share MVAC plans with veteran communities coordinating with subcommittees #2 and #4.
  - e. Develop a briefing for Matthews Town Staff explaining MVAC objectives and possible impact on Town Staff.
  - f. Coordinate news releases via Town every six weeks.
  - g. Attend Town American Legion Veterans Day event and coordinate with Matthews Rotary on Veterans week luncheon.
  - h. Prepare potential member packets with By-laws, SOPs and membership.

### **3. Subcommittee 2.**

a. Ed Dement presented an updated three-month rolling calendar prepared by Amanda Kohout.

b. With the assistance of Carol and Gary Aljets, the Traveling Vietnam Exhibit will be displayed at the Matthews Community Center, 100 McDowell St. E., the weekend of May 20<sup>th</sup> for 11 days. The exhibit will also be featured for Memorial Day weekend for three days starting May 27<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers are needed to sit with the exhibit for viewing times to be announced. Those who would like to add to the display whether MVAC members or others may do so with ToM approval.

c. Regarding the ToM Veteran Signature Event proposed for May 18, 2018, Fisk remarked that SC#2 and Chair will meet prior to February meeting to prepare for a briefing to the ToM Mayor and Board. MVAC volunteers for this event will be needed.

d. Ed announced a Men's Breakfast on January 24<sup>th</sup> at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Charlotte with speaker, Gen. Peter Pace (Ret.), Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 2005 to 2007. Additional handout of Charlotte Bridge Home sponsored events was passed to members.

**4. Subcommittee 3.** John Ramseur said his committee met prior to MVAC meeting to work on two goals: (1) Joe Bochicchio is going to focus on networking with local and regional resources and, (2) John will focus on the Town of Matthews Government and the Chamber of Commerce as an outreach effort for information about hiring practices for vets by businesses and the ToM.

**5. Subcommittee 4.** Greg Smith said his committee met on January 9<sup>th</sup> and set the following goals:

a. Develop a tri-fold brochure about MVAC for use as handouts at meetings and events. The subcommittee will also develop a smaller local veteran resource guide with each member taking a section of the NC4VETS magazine (now digital version) and sort out local/regional resources for veterans. Charlotte Bridge Home and Mecklenburg County VA services will also be tapped for resources. SC#4 recommends the local veteran guide to include information on employment, health, education and social opportunities to include available military associations and local chapters/post contacts. Fisk advised an outside printing company would be required for the projects. Fisk will add the resource guide proposal to his Executive Summary for the ToM.

b. Continue to approach local businesses to encourage programs for vets. These businesses could be included in the proposed brochure.

c. Request a letter from MVAC Chairperson as an introduction and some form of MVAC identification for approaching businesses.

d. Develop a plan for vetting resources to insure follow through on what it offers.

e. Develop a feedback form for vets to be able to monitor their participation.

**6.** Bridge line versus conference calls. Fisk explained that using the bridge line which is now available in the ToM conference room for committee members to use while out of town to participate in monthly MVAC meetings. Conference calls may be used for subcommittee business. A free Web site: [freeconferencecall.com](http://freeconferencecall.com).

7. Group emails on ToM Web mail. If sending an email to a group select individual address and hit enter for each addressee.

## **New Business:**

### **1. Chairperson Remarks:**

a. Fisk will give a briefing on MVAC's progress and goals to ToM on February 27<sup>th</sup>. John Ramseur requested that if that date changes, MVAC members be informed so they can attend the Town meeting. Fisk has compared the subcommittee goals and achievements with the proposed 2017 MVAC goals and found that all were in synch.

b. Fisk had a handout for MVAC 2017 Goals which are:

(1.) Act in an advisory capacity to the ToM: Accomplishing the directives as set forth in the Bylaws established by the ToM for the MVAC, and maintaining timely communications with the ToM staff through semi-annual reviews of MVAC goals and achievements.

(2.) Within the MVAC: Maintain a full and diverse and experienced MVAC membership; Support the efforts of the four subcommittees to reach their respective goals; Educate the members of MVAC about the identification, needs, hopes and aspirations of our Military Members, Veterans and their Families through:

(a.) The "speakers program" at regular monthly meetings with a goal of one per quarter

(b.) Each subcommittee – One semi-annual by a member of each

(3.) Prepare an accurate assessment of the numbers, composition and needs of the Veterans, Military Members and Military Families in the local area.

(4.) Investigate possibility of a Town of Matthews MVAC Web site

(5.) Communicate: "Getting the word out."

(a.) Raise the awareness of our local Veterans/Military Members/and their Families of the Town of Matthews efforts to make Matthews a Military Friendly Community via the media and direct contact.

(b.) Identify the MVAC to the Matthews Community including businesses, civic and Veteran organizations, the media, the general community, and area Veterans, Military Members and their Families via news releases, banners and placards and direct contact.

(c.) Increase the MVAC interaction with local resource organizations through direct contact and attendance at events and meetings.

c. Fisk explained the protocol for potential new members:

(1) Potential member must attend a meeting as a visitor. If interested in becoming a MVAC member, he or she may fill out a membership form at Town Hall from the Town Clerk for vetting by the MVAC executive board. Potential member may then

attend the next meeting to introduce themselves to the MVAC Committee and a vote to accept them as a member can be conducted. If voted in by MVAC, the prospective member's name goes forward to ToM Board of Commissioners for a vote. A letter of appointment from the ToM will be sent to the individual for a two-year membership on the committee from the date of specific appointment (this will require a bylaw change). A new application will be required for another two-year term on MVAC. There are no term limits. A motion was made to modify the membership term requirements by Ed Dement as follows: Change MVAC Bylaws to permit a full two-year term from date of appointment from the Town of Matthews. The motion was seconded by Joe Bochicchio. A vote was taken and the motion was carried.

(2) Officer terms remain at one (1) year and all four officers must be MVAC members. A motion was made by Terry Price as follows: Present a slate of officers in May with election to be held in June with terms running from July-June to coincide with ToM fiscal year. The motion was seconded by Greg Smith. The motion carried unanimously. There are no term limits.

d. Fisk attended the Mecklenburg Veterans Council meeting this past month. He paid the \$25 dues for MVAC. He was given information about a NC4ME Hiring Event for veterans on February 7, 2017 from 9 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at The Employers Association, 3020 West Arrowood Road, Charlotte. Pre-match registration deadline is January 24<sup>th</sup>.

e. Ed, Janet and Fisk attended the screening of "Thank You For Your Service" sponsored by the American Red Cross. The film highlighted the fact that there is a shortage of mental health professionals. A discussion about access to the VA followed regarding qualifying for VA care in connection with service time and income thresholds. Guest Janene McGee shared a VA News Release regarding a new regulation decreasing the cost of outpatient medication and co-pays for most veterans. More information at [www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-12-12/pdf/2016-29515.pdf](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-12-12/pdf/2016-29515.pdf).

2. Treasurer Jack Santaniello presented a financial structure for MVAC with forms necessary to present a yearly budget for the MVAC and each of its subcommittees. Additional forms and procedures were distributed for requesting off-budget items and for evaluating vendors/suppliers. All budget requests are to be given to Jack first before going to the executive board and ToM for approval. Any expenditure over \$500 requires two bids. Jack's goal is to have the budget forms on the Web.

The next MVAC meeting is February 1, 2017.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Submitted by:  
Kathleen Wilsbach, Secretary